MARKET SEGMENT REPORT **TAKE-OUT** 147

C1200-5 A

Restaurant Business

A BILL PUBLICATION

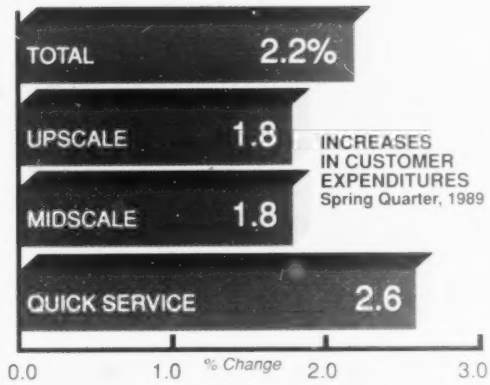
SEPTEMBER 1, 1989

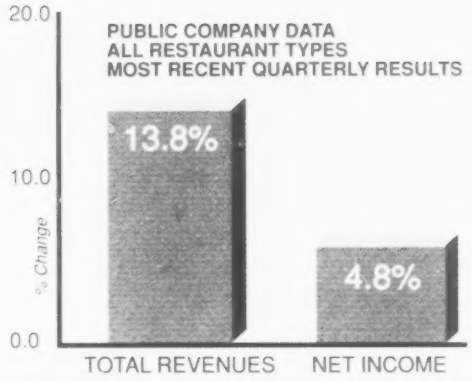
Rich Harvest

FOUR SEASON'S ISADORE SHARP AND ALFONS KONRAD REAP SUCCESS IN HOTEL DINING 95

THE HARD FACTS SHAPING OUR INDUSTRY

BUSINESS BAROMETER





A Sluggish Spring

According to preliminary figures released by the CREST service of NPD Research, total customer expenditure increases for the spring quarter were up 2.2% over the year-ago period. This is down from the 5.0% year-to-year increase in the winter quarter.

The spring quarter increase was constrained by the midscale and upscale segments, in which expenditures increased only 1.8%. The relatively sluggish performance of all segments can be attributed, to a great extent, to decreases in customer traffic at quick-service and midscale restaurants and operators' decreased ability to pass along price increases to customers.

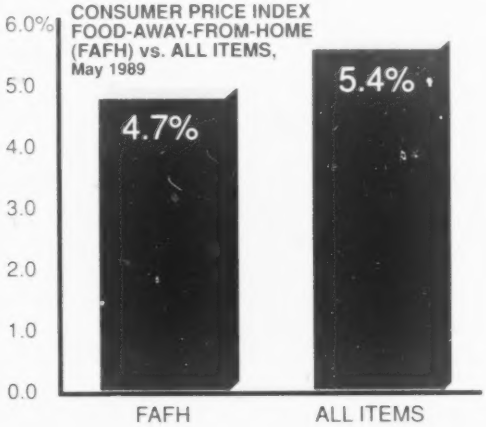
SOURCE: CREST Service of NPD Research

McD Tilts The Scale

The 88 publicly held restaurant companies tracked by Technomic Inc. show a double-digit increase in average revenue growth (13.8%). In contrast, net income grew only 4.8% over the same quarter last year. Midscale and upscale operators posted net income decreases of 8.8% and 12%, respectively.

Large profit increases from diversified companies (like TW Services and General Mills) and McDonald's were able to overcome these decreases to produce overall growth for publicly held restaurants. In fact, if McDonald's is excluded from the report, net income for the remaining 87 companies decreases 1.0%.

SOURCE: Company Quarterly Reports and Technomic Inc.



Slow Rise In FAFH

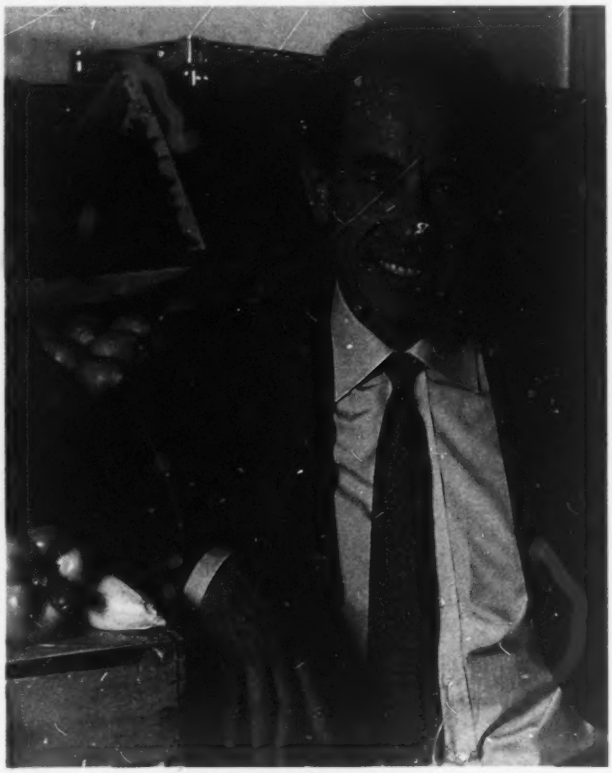
The Consumer Price Index (CPI) released by the Department of Commerce shows that Food Away From Home (FAFH) rose 4.7% in May 1989 as compared with the same month last year. This trails the 5.4% rise in the CPI for All Items (all goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living). The higher change in CPI for All items can be attributed to a 9.8% jump in energy, a 7.3% rise in both medical care and transportation, and an 8.1% rise in Food At Home in May. FAFH's lower percent change may be attributed to the reluctance to increase prices in a competitive market. While a lower rate of inflation in FAFH is refreshing, it still has experienced a greater rate over the past five years, climbing 2.9 points above the CPI for All Items.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce

RESTAURANT BUSINESS

CONTENTS

SEPTEMBER 1, 1989 VOL. 88 NO. 13



COVER STORY: *Four Seasons Hotels, page 95.*

MENU IDEAS: *Poultry, page 173.*

COVER STORY

HOTEL FOODSERVICE FOUR SEASONS. *While competition for the business traveler has gotten tighter, this international upscale hotel company has managed to successfully transform a hodge-podge of hotels into a luxury chain and has adapted to the myriad challenges of a tough marketplace* **95**

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

DRAFTS, CARAFES & SPIRITS PREMIUM BRANDS. *Customers today may be drinking less, but they're drinking better. Featuring a premium well not only captures this market but also gives a boost to your image* **161**

MENU IDEAS POULTRY. *No food category addresses the trend of simple but entertaining fare better than poultry. It can be prepared in dishes ranging from traditional to exotic, in appetizers, salads, or main dishes. Chicken, turkey, duck, and domesticated game birds lend themselves especially well to hearty and uncomplicated grilling, frying, and roasting* **173**

FEATURES

RB SPOTLIGHT WOMEN'S FORUM. Restaurant Business *has sponsored the formation of a national organization committed to the career advancement of women in hospitality* **83**

HUMAN RESOURCES BRIDGING THE GAP. *The labor shortage will be the most difficult challenge the industry faces in the coming decade. Today's foodservice industry leader must tap into the minority labor pool and take steps to attract new workers* **86**

FOR INDEPENDENTS AQUAVIT. *Nordic talents in architecture, cuisine, and finance have combined to create an authentic Scandinavian outpost in New York* **108**

SHOW PREVIEW NAFEM/89. *This year's equipment extravaganza, sponsored by the National Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers, promises to be bigger and better than ever* **115**

MARKET SEGMENT REPORT TAKE-OUT. *About 45% of all restaurants offer food for off-premise consumption, and that percentage is rapidly growing as restaurateurs figure out the operational aspects of this service* **147**

Cover photograph by Nancy Scariati

Published 18 times a year by Restaurant Business Magazine, 633 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Vol. 88 No. 13. Second Class Postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional office (ISSN 0097-8043). Postmaster please send address changes to Restaurant Business, P.O. Box 5309, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017.

COLUMNS AND DEPARTMENTS

BUSINESS BAROMETER 2

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. *Readers' Forum* 6

DISTRIBUTOR'S VIEWPOINT. *Paul Gordon, Gordon Food Service Inc.* 11

RESTAURANT OPENINGS 16

INSIGHTS. *Industry News* 20

MENU MONITOR 26

TRADE QUOTES. *Stock Market Reports* 50

MENU PLANNER'S GUIDE 57

COMPUTER LINK. *Hidden ECR/POS Concerns* 76

BAR MANAGEMENT GUIDE 80

ON TAP. *Conducting a Beer Tasting to Promote Your Beer List* 112

BUYER'S CIRCLE. *Noteworthy Equipment* 166

EQUIPMENT I.Q. *Ice Makers* 181

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS 188

LATELINE. *Last-minute Newsbreaks* 192

WASHINGTON WATCH. *Capitol Observations* 194

INDEX TO OPERATORS 195

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS 196

READER COMMENT CARD 197

INDUSTRY EVENT

The Seventh **SYMPOSIUM ON AMERICAN CUISINE**, *co-sponsored by* Restaurant Business, *will take place in Santa Fe, NM, Sept. 10-13, 1989.*

For more information, contact: Symposium on American Cuisine, 304 W. Liberty St., Suite 301, Louisville, KY 40202.

REPRINTS, INDEX AVAILABLE

Restaurant Business *now has available specially prepared reprints of the* **1988 RESTAURANT GROWTH INDEX** *and the* **1989 MAJOR FORCES IN FRANCHISING**. *The reprints are available for $5 per copy.*

The **1989 RESTAURANT GROWTH INDEX** *is coming soon, in the September 20 issue. Reprints will be available beginning in mid-September.*

In addition, Restaurant Business *is now offering its* **1988 EDITORIAL INDEX** *for $4.5 per copy.*

Direct inquiries to: Editor Peter Berlinski, Restaurant Business, 633 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017.

MARKET SEGMENT REPORT: *Take-out, page 147.*

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

COVER STORY

22ND RESTAURANT GROWTH INDEX

Our exclusive segment and market-by-market data represents the only package of its kind in the industry, and is requested by hundreds of readers, executives, marketers, consultants, and members of the press. Technomic Inc. will provide current and five-year projected sales and purchase figures for the eight major market segments (separate eating and drinking places, hotel/motel, retail, health care, student, B&I, transportation, and leisure), accompanied by trend pieces on each segment. In addition, we will publish exclusive Regional, MSA, and ADI summaries from *Sales & Marketing Management*, and rankings of all U.S. markets—by populations, sales, EBI, and other criteria.

MENU IDEAS

POTATO CLASSICS

Potatoes can be elegant or earthy, American or international. They are also profitable and versatile for the operator, and appealing to the customer. A wide range of potato "classics"—from old-fashioned O'Brien potatoes to contemporary stuffed potato entrees—will illustrate how spuds can be dressed up or down to make a profit for the operator.

DRAFTS

REGIONAL AND SPECIALTY BREWS

"Boutique" beers and exotic imports are all the rage among adventurous, upscale drinkers. This article features tips on how to select and merchandise a wide range of specialty beers.

Announcing
The Seventh Symposium on American Cuisine
September 10-13, 1989
The Eldorado Hotel
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Leave your restaurant for four days and see what happens.

It'll do wonders for your business. It'll do wonders for *you*! We'll not only recharge your batteries, we'll challenge your thinking about restaurant management today...expose you to some highly profitable ideas...and give you the chance to sample the most popular cuisine going these days. Join us for four very rewarding days this fall in Santa Fe.

"Hard Times—Hard Choices:
The Realities of Operating a Restaurant in the 90's."

- Managing today's restaurant profitably.
- The new temperance movement.
- How to develop alternative sources of revenue.
- The American palate in the 1990's.
- Should you really open that second restaurant?
- An in-depth look at Southwestern cuisine.
- A practical primer on Southwestern cooking, with guest chefs including Dean Fearing, *The Mansion on Turtle Creek*, Mark Miller, *Coyote Cafe*, and John Sedlar, *St. Estephe*.
- All this...and much, much more!

Co-sponsored by
The Society for Cuisine in America
and *Restaurant Business* magazine.

Mail or FAX coupon today for brochure and registration materials. But hurry, attendance is definitely limited!

Yes! Tell me more about the Seventh Symposium on American Cuisine.

Society for Cuisine in America
304 West Liberty Street
Suite 301
Louisville, KY 40202
FAX: 502/589-3602
Phone: 502/583-3783

Name _____ Title _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

For information circle number 190

Restaurant Business

EDITORIAL STAFF
EDITOR: Peter R. Berlinski
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Shelley Wolson
MANAGING EDITOR: Tom Strenk
NEWS EDITOR: Howard Riell
SENIOR EDITOR: Paul Frumkin
ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR: Donna Perkinson
SENIOR WRITER: Nancy Cohen
PRODUCTS EDITOR: Herme Shore
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Mary Ann Tasoulas

FOOD EDITOR: Scott Allmendinger
ASSISTANT FOOD EDITOR: Christianne Ingegno
BEVERAGE EDITOR: James Scarpa
FOOD CONSULTANT: Kathleen Kenny Sanderson

WEST COAST EDITOR: Kevin Farrell (714) 964-6470
MIDWEST EDITOR: James Scarpa (312) 782-1266
WASHINGTON COLUMNIST: Edmund Andrews

ART DIRECTOR: Lisa Powers
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR: Beth Meyers
ASSOCIATE GRAPHICS DIRECTOR: Shari Fang
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR: Susan Froberg

SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITORS: Denise M. Brennan, Patricia M. Kolb, Joan M. Lang

COLUMNISTS
Patricia Baird, Dr. Michael Kasavana, Irv L. Blackman, Gen LaGreca, Dr. Joseph Durocher, Karen MacNeil, David L. Epstein, Bill Main, Dr. Mortimer R. Feinberg, Edmund Osterland, Dr. Sandy Kapoor, Karen Wilk Rubin, Don Shapiro

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Carol Casper, Don Nichols, Jacque White Kochak, Ralph Raffio, James Peters

PRESIDENT/GROUP PUBLISHER: Jeffrey P. Berlind

Editorial Office
633 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017
(212) 986-4800

Midwest Office
180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 782-1266

West Coast Office
10540 Talbert Ave., East Tower, Suite 150
Fountain Valley, CA 92708
(714) 964-6470

RESTAURANT BUSINESS Magazine (formerly FAST FOOD) (ISSN 0097-8043) is published 18 times a year by Bill Communications, Inc., 633 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017. Telephone 212-986-4800.

Copyright © 1989 by Bill Communications, Inc. All rights reserved. Subscriptions in the U.S.: $74; foreign and Canada: $114; air mail: $212. Single copies in the U.S. and Canada: $5. Second class postage paid at New York, NY and at additional offices. Postmaster: Send address corrections to Restaurant Business, Attention: Roseanne Walsh, Circ. Dept., 633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6743.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal personal use by specific clients, is granted by Restaurant Business for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance (CCC) Transactional Reporting Service, provided that the base fee of $3 per copy is paid directly to CCC, 21 Congress St., Salem, MA 01970. (0273-9313/81 $3) Special requests should be addressed to Peter Berlinski at Restaurant Business.

TAKE-OUT AND DRIVE-THRU

MARKET SEGMENT REPORT

THROUGHOUT THE INDUSTRY, foodservice operators are singing the praises of take-out and delivery. In some cases, take-out business can mean the difference between success and failure, red ink and black.

"Our eat-in traffic is off," says Julia Middlebrook, owner of The Chateau in Waltham, MA. "Take-out is what's really giving us additional business right now." Middlebrook reports that, over the past two years, take-out has increased from 10% to 15% of the restaurant's $6 million annual sales.

Forty-five percent of all restaurants are now preparing food for off-premise consumption, according to CREST, a service of NPD Research in Park Ridge, IL. Take-out dining occasions have grown 40% per capita over the past five years, while restaurant dining frequency has remained flat.

Quick-service properties have responded the most aggressively of any segment: 61% now offer take-out food, compared to 15% in the midscale segment and 7% of upscale restaurants. Noncommercial operators are feeling the competition and starting programs of their own.

"All the operators talk about is take-out and delivery," says Jim Degan, head of Santa Barbara, CA-based James M. Degan Inc., a foodservice consulting group. Degan conducts focus groups for various segments of the industry. Says Degan, "From every segment and price point, they all are interested in tapping into this market."

Feeding this new trend are innovations in packaging foods to go. Entrepreneurs are discovering new ways to order and deliver food, such as "menu

continued on page 148

At Chin-Chin restaurants, take-out now accounts for at least 25% of sales.

About 45% of all commercial restaurants are now offering a variety of prepared foods for off-premise consumption.

By Kevin Farrell

TAKE-OUT AND DRIVE-THRU

magazines," fax machines, and delivery services.

EQUIPMENT AND PACKAGING. In addition to consumer demand, Degan points to innovations in packaging and equipment as factors contributing to off-premise dining. "There are holding cabinets today that weren't available as little as two years ago," he says.

Packaging is a major factor in the take-out equation. Many establishments work with paper companies to design innovative and attractive packaging. At a recent meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Foodservice Research, an industry trade group for research and development professionals, a large portion of the two-day program on take-out was concerned specifically with take-out packaging. "This is the direction operators want to be going, and they need help in exploring packaging operational aspects," says Phillip Cooke, executive vice president of the society.

Bob Mandler, owner of four Chin-Chin restaurants in the Los Angeles area, reports that take-out sales are increasing rapidly at his locations. When he opened in 1983, Mandler thought that retail products would be the big sellers. Since then he has gradually reduced retail products and increased take-out food. Take-out now accounts for at least 25% of sales; in some locations, it garners 40%.

The newest Chin-Chin, in Marina del Ray, was designed specifically to accommodate a large volume of take-out business. "Today, I have to say that take-out offers the greatest opportunity," Mandler says.

There are several approaches to designing take-out programs. Some operators offer take-out as an additional service; customers order from the regular menus. Others have developed menus specifically for take-out and delivery; the advantage is that some foods transport better than others. (For more details on this subject, see "Menu Ideas," July 20, 1989.)

Some entrepreneurs have conceived take-out-and-delivery-only operations. The elimination of seating decreases construction, real estate, and labor costs. Some chains have created satellite systems to deal with take-out and delivery; a full-service restaurant can spawn a number of take-out-only units.

In Florida, Hop Too's offers delivery of upscale Chinese food cooked to order. The average check is $12.50.

FAST FOOD. Fast-food chains have long been battling in the take-out arena. In this segment, this lucrative market can account for 60% of sales.

The battle is particularly hot in California, with its 20 million drivers and 13 million cars. "People virtually live in their cars in California and in most of the markets we operate in," says Jack Goodall, chairman and CEO of Foodmaker, the parent company of San Diego-based Jack In The Box. Jack In The Box has about 1,000 fast-food restaurants in nine western states.

"We have designed products expressly for take-out," says Goodall. "We build portability into our products. We make them as user-friendly as possible, so people can eat in their cars."

Jack In The Box's fajita pita sandwiches are a good example. Chicken fajitas and beef fajitas are served with cheese, lettuce, and onions in easy-to-hold pita bread pockets. The chicken and beef pitas accounted for $80 million of 1988 sales. The company recently extended the line with a scrambled egg pocket sandwich.

Leann Chin's Chinese Cuisine is focusing on take-out. "This is what people want," says vice president Laura Chin. She says that take-out accounts for 50% of sales at the 12 units. Nine of the units are take-out-and-delivery-only. In the other three units, a separate area has been added to accommodate take-out.

But the battle for take-out dollars has

continued on page 150

MARKET SEGMENT REPORT

TAKE-OUT AND DRIVE-THRU

moved into the midscale and—especially over the last few years—into the upscale market segments. Many of the food, delivery, and packaging innovations are occurring in the upscale end of the marketplace.

Chef Ryo Sato, owner of Chez Sato in Arcadia, CA, and Chez François in Los Angeles, now offers his customers take-out fare in picnic baskets. "My customers made it clear that they wanted something like this," he says.

Many of his customers at his downtown location, Chez François, pick up the picnic baskets after work, on their way to events at the Hollywood Bowl or other outdoor venues. There are six baskets with different products available for purchase. Prices range from $20 to $26 per person.

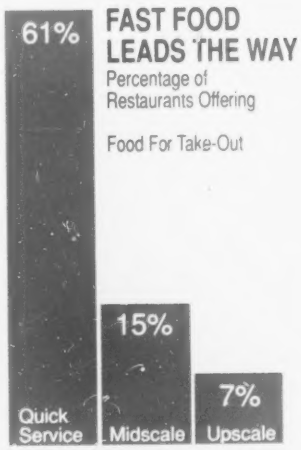
In Arcadia, Sato offers similar baskets, but at prices that are more in line with that market, from $13 to $20. Sato reports selling 60 to 70 baskets a day. Very little extra prep work is needed so labor costs are relatively low compared to the additional sales garnered.

Sato also operates the executive dining room at the ARCO building in downtown Los Angeles. There, many of the executives purchase the picnic baskets to take home so family members won't have to cook. "Some customers use it as a special-occasion treat," reports Sato.

Sales of the baskets have not only improved profits but have also increased the restaurants' visibility. "The baskets are free advertising," Sato says. Table tents and POS signage market the service to restaurant patrons. A direct-mail piece was also circulated prior to the Hollywood Bowl event season.

CAFETERIAS. In the highly competitive cafeteria market segment, Morrison's and Luby's are gaining add-on sales with take-out.

Mobile, AL-based Morrison's has 30 separate take-out operations in its restaurants. According to Richard McGeoch, senior vice president for Morrison's, take-out now accounts for 10% to 20% of total sales of $829 million. Morrison's is considering opening more take-out windows. It also has one free-standing, take-out-only store in operation. The 123-unit chain is considering expanding its test of the freestanding, limited-menu take-out unit.



SOURCE: CREST, NPD RESEARCH

Luby's has remodeled some of its cafeterias to create separate entrances for take-out customers to place and pick up orders. One unit in Luby's San Antonio headquarters has a drive-thru.

"Our new units will be built with the separate take-out entrance, and most older stores will be remodeled to accommodate it," says Bill Robson of Luby's. "This is too lucrative to ignore. All the data indicates that this is the fastest growing part of the industry."

Luby's also accepts orders that are phoned in for pick-up. The chain is considering the use of fax machines for ordering. "We're not ruling anything out," says Robson.

OFFICE SUPPLIES. Chicago-based Levy Restaurant Group, operator of 27 restaurants, is also tapping into the take-out trend. One of its successful endeavors is Eadie's Kitchen and Market, located in Chicago's Sears Tower.

Eadie's has no seating, so "everything we serve is going somewhere else," says Levy's executive chef Jim Blake. Last year, Eadie's sales topped $1.3 million, despite the fact that it is only open from 6:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. At breakfast, the average check is $2. At lunch, it rises to $5.50. According to Blake, Eadie's daily traffic count is nearly 4,000.

Various kiosks each offer a different kind of food. Oriental food, pastas, a bakery, salad bars, deli, and grilled items all compete for consumer interest. The biggest-selling item is a grilled chicken sandwich.

In addition to the kiosk food, hot food is sold from carts in the halls of Sears Tower. "These carts are relatively new, but we've found that they really do the job," says Blake. "We may expand and put in more."

However, "Selling packaged food to go at night does not work at Eadie's," reports Blake. Precooked dinners were offered to departing commuters, without success. "The food was good, but people didn't want to carry it home on the trains," says Blake. "They would rather buy it in their home neighborhoods."

Most restaurateurs acknowledge that ease of service is really the key to success. "I have tried to make it as easy as possible for people to buy our products," says Michael Del Monaco, presi-

continued on page 155

Take-out food sales have grown about 40% per capita in just the past five years; in the meantime, on-premise traffic has remained flat.

dent of Florentine Italian Foods Inc. of San Jose, CA. Del Monaco owns 13 restaurants; five of them are pasta take-out stands. At these stands, pastas and sauces are ready to eat or are available for reheating. "There is an incredible market for this service, at least in this area," says Del Monaco.

UNIQUENESS SELLS. Paella Plus in Austin, TX, specializes in the Spanish rice-and-seafood dish that it's named for. Entrepreneurs Brigitte de Roch and Michael Niland require 24 hours' notice to prepare the dish. Enough paella for two people is priced at $32; a four-person portion is $48.

"We have been amazed at how people have gone for this," Niland says. "They want a special treat, and they want it to be easy and of high quality."

A busy weekend night can bring orders for 40 to 50 dishes, but Niland says demand is difficult to predict. "Once we start peeling shrimp, we might just as well peel 1,000 as 100," he says. "But it is a real juggling act to do our purchasing and hire labor."

Another entrepreneur trying to create a niche is Chuck Miller, a former executive with Taco Bell. His creation, Hop Too's, offers upscale Chinese food cooked to order. Hop Too's Inc., based in Pompano Beach, FL, has seven units open in Florida and Massachusetts.

"We use no steam tables or spices designed to 'enhance' flavor," says Miller. "In this way, we attract two types of customers—people who want food fast, and people who are interested in quality Chinese food."

Miller calls his take-out-and-delivery-only units "food factories." The units require only 900 to 1,000 sq. ft. The average check is $12.50. Delivery is the key, with 90% of all orders delivered within 30 minutes.

Marketing take-out and delivery has also seen some innovations. *L.A. Delivers* is a magazine that contains only delivery advertisements. About 60% of its pages are taken up with restaurant advertising and menu reprints. Founder Leigh Fortier publishes three—soon to be four—editions of the magazine throughout the sprawling Los Angeles basin. One edition focuses on the city's west side, one on downtown L.A., one on the valleys north of the city; the newest will be for the beach cities along the western coast.

Special delivery services that offer food from several different restaurants have recently sprung up in major metropolitan areas.

Restaurateurs usually print entire menus as advertising, and it is easy for consumers to select a dining-out alternative from the menus. Maps delineate delivery areas.

In Boston, there is a similar publication, entitled *Boston Delivers*. But only 40% of the advertising space is purchased by restaurants. "There are fewer restaurants delivering in Boston than in Los Angeles," says publisher Evan Moltz of Direct Media Publications Inc. The 35,000-circulation Boston edition will soon be joined by Brookline and Cambridge editions.

FAX FACTS. Food ordering by fax machine might be the hottest growth area. There are now over two million fax machines operating in the U.S.

Ordering by fax eliminates misunderstandings with orders, and facilitates speed and accuracy. "It has revolutionized our business, enabling us to put out more food faster than ever before," says Abe Lebewohl, owner of New York City's Second Avenue Ko-

continued on page 156

Mobile, AL-based Morrison's has 30 separate take-out operations in its restaurants. Take-out now accounts for 10% to 20% of total sales.

TAKE-OUT AND DRIVE-THRU

sher Deli and Restaurant.

The deli's fax machines start up at 9:30 a.m. and don't stop until closing time. "I don't have people on the phone all the time. My employees spend their time preparing and delivering food, not trying to take orders on the phone," says Lebewohl. Take-out is responsible for about 30% of his restaurant's $3 million in sales.

NEW SERVICE. Another innovation is the advent of delivery services, which deliver full-course meals from established restaurants for a nominal delivery fee. Services in New York, Boston, Seattle, New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago all report varying degrees of success with the concept. Generally, the delivery services operate under contract with restaurants. Patrons order from the regular menus provided by the contracted restaurants, which provide dishes to the delivery services at a lower cost.

"Our profit is in the middle," says Bruce Dudley of Boston's Dining-In Inc. The company gets the markup from the item and a delivery fee of $3 to $5 per stop.

"For consumers, the beauty of the service is that a party of four can order from four different restaurants," says Brian Keil of Chicago's Room Service Delivers Inc. "We deliver from 12 of Chicago's hottest restaurants." Restaurants include Shaw's Crab House, Hat Dance, Bistro 110, and Ditka's.

The average check is about $37 per delivery. Chicago's Room Service Delivers has a number of radio-dispatched, eye-catching vans that deliver the food. "They are our best marketing tools," Keil says.

"People can get just about anything they want from us, and we deliver to a wide geographical area," he adds. Food is kept hot during travel time and the tuxedo-clad drivers sometimes finish preparing the food on the way.

NONCOMMERCIAL. While the commercial segment is clearly focusing on take-out and delivery, the noncommercial segment is also jumping on the bandwagon.

One such operator is Nick Spanelli, who runs the foodservice operations for First Wisconsin National Bank in Milwaukee. The operation offers breakfast and lunch service like most noncommercial feeders. But, at 3 p.m., the operation offers take-home entrees.

A monthly menu is published that lists two daily specials plus six to eight regular entrees. The innovation now represents about 15% of the operation's annual sales, according to Spanelli. "We were told to become a profitable operation, after being subsidized in the past," he says.

"And it is the take-out business that has made the difference for us. It generated $250,000 last year. You have to keep one foot in the commercial market to be successful."

Consumers who are used to getting fast, quality food are now spending more time at home, and they want the same high quality they came to expect from restaurants. The take-out and delivery rush is still going strong, and will continue to be a major vehicle for boosting sales.

Chef Ryo Sato, owner of Chez Sato and Chez François, with a customer who is picking up one of Sato's popular take-out picnic baskets.

Profitable Poultry

Serve spicy Buffalo drumsticks with blue-cheese dressing and cut vegetables for a low-cost menu item.

BY SCOTT ALLMENDINGER

There is no doubt that the major restaurant trend of the late '80s and early '90s is the movement towards simple but entertaining fare, quickly prepared and offered in casual surroundings at popular prices. No food category dovetails with this trend better than poultry, which can be prepared in dishes ranging from traditional to exotic, and served up as appetizers, salads, or main courses. Chicken, turkey, duck, and domesticated game birds lend themselves especially well to hearty and uncomplicated grilling, frying, and roasting—today's cooking methods of choice.

Poultry has certainly taken off with the public. According to the USDA, chicken consumption will rise 4% in 1989, while turkey consumption will rise 3%. Consumption of red meat items, in comparison, continues to slide, and seafood remains a question mark (see chart on page 174). Eighty-eight percent of all restaurants now serve chicken (up from 81% in 1986), 51% serve turkey, and 14% serve duck, according to *Restaurant Business* research. To keep the trend going, the National Broiler Council, a Washington, DC-based trade organization, has tagged September as National Chicken Month.

VALUE PERCEPTION. Chicken and other poultry were reported to be the most profitable center-of-plate items in both our 1986 and 1988 surveys. In fact, the USDA attributes the rise in poultry consumption to good value perception, among other factors. "Clearly price is a big factor, especially with chicken," says

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DON KUSHNICK. FOODSTYLING BY KATHLEEN KENNY SANDERSON.

agricultural economist Judith Putnam. The operators we talked to, however, are unsure about price trends for the immediate future. Although the impact of last year's drought has tailed off, growing consumer demand for white meat chicken will probably continue to push the price up for breasts, already the most expensive cut. The rollout of whole-muscle chicken breast sandwiches by such industry titans as Oak Brook, IL-based McDonald's Corp. is also likely to shorten supplies until breeders can respond.

While acknowledging such concerns, Albert Zehnder, executive vice president of Zehnder's of Frankenmuth in Frankenmuth, MI, is optimistic. Zehnder and his staff dish up chicken to 75% of the 1 million guests who visit the establishment annually, or 11 tons of chicken per week. "We're paying 65¢ to 71¢ a pound for chicken now, as opposed to 45¢ to 52¢ two years ago," says Zehnder. "But even if the price goes to $2 a pound, we'll still sell it, because that's what people want and that's what we're known for."

AMERICAN STAPLE. Zehnder attributes chicken's popularity to the fact that it is "an American staple. People are comfortable ordering it because they know what they're going to get. Kids like chicken because it doesn't smell strong or look funny." Zehnder's "flagship meal" is the family chicken dinner, an all-you-can-eat meal of fried chicken with all the fixin's for $10.95. Homemade chicken soup starts off the dinner, and is followed by a salad course that includes cole slaw, cranberry relish, cottage cheese, and house cheese spread. Fixin's for the fried chicken entree include dressing, mashed potatoes, vegetable of the day, noodles with a buttered cracker crumb topping, and giblet gravy. Sautéed chicken livers or giblets are available for $1.75 extra.

The chickens used for the family dinners are 3¼- to 3½-lb. fryers that are parboiled, cooled, and cut into 10 pieces per bird (two drumsticks, two thighs, two wings, and four breast pieces). The cooled pieces are dipped in egg wash and a secret-formula dry breading before being deep fried in all-vegetable oil. The normal portion for an à la carte chicken meal is one wing, one white meat piece, and one dark meat piece. The family-style dinner portion begins with two pieces per person, but more is available on request. Four-pound "heavy hens" are boiled and picked for chicken salad meat; the cooking liquid is used for soup.

White meat is increasing in popularity, according to Zehnder. "The dark meat that doesn't get served goes into our dressing mixture." White meat mania also means that chicken-specialty restaurants must offer a variety of boneless chicken breast options, as well. "The whole area of chicken breasts has really gone nuts. We're expected to have them."

Zehnder's now offers a boneless chicken breast marinated in white wine and tarragon, topped with sautéed onions, avocado, tomatoes, mushrooms, and ripe olives. Eighteen months after its introduction, Chicken Francisco—which sells for $11.25—has become the third most popular item on the menu. Other boneless breast items include nuggets, charbroiled chicken sandwiches, and a grilled boneless chicken kabob special.

MCDONALD'S MOVE. Tom Meyer, corporate chef of Washington, DC-based Clyde's Inc., is also bracing for the impact McDonald's chicken sandwich will have on the chicken breast market. "I just bought 40,000 pounds the other day to protect myself," he says. Meyer will need all that chicken and more: A hot chicken salad featuring a grilled marinated 8-oz. breast with romaine, tomatoes, cucumbers, and feta cheese accounts for up to 20% of lunch covers at Clyde's Georgetown location.

"Hot chicken salad started off as a hot steak salad," says Meyer, "but the waiters—who order their own meals off the menu—started ordering it with chicken. I figured if the waiters liked it so much, they could sell a lot of it." Meyer uses bottled Italian dressing to marinate the chicken breasts, and dresses the $7.75 salad with a blend of mustard, oil, vinegar, shallots, anchovies, and lemon juice. Other white-hot sellers at Clyde's are chargrilled chicken breast sandwiches, with a choice of melted muenster or pepperoni, marinara, and mozzarella ($7.50), and spicy grilled chicken tenderloins with a cool ranch sauce ($5.50).

Meyer is not putting all his eggs into one basket, however. While boneless

BUFFALO STICKS

Underutilized drumsticks star in this meatier version of popular spicy Buffalo wings (pictured on opening page)

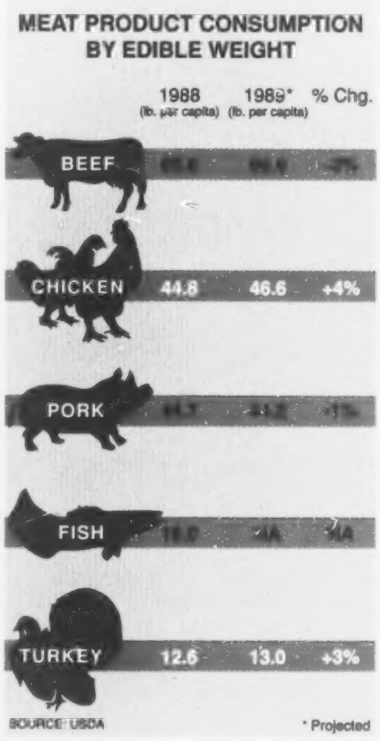
10 lb. chicken drumsticks
1 cup hot pepper sauce
½ cup vinegar
8 oz. clarified butter
Garnishes: blue-cheese dressing, celery sticks, scallion brushes, carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, cauliflower or broccoli florets

1. Poach drumsticks in simmering water until cooked through. Drain well.

2. Combine hot pepper sauce, vinegar, and butter, and heat through.

3. Deep-fry drumsticks to order, toss with butter-sauce mixture. Serve on lettuce leaves in basket along with blue-cheese dressing and vegetable garnishes.

(Yield: approximately 40 drumsticks)



MENU IDEAS

chicken breasts may be today's hot button, he believes there is tremendous potential for the entire poultry category, which represents approximately 30% of covers at all Clyde's restaurants.

THE GREATEST DEAL. "The greatest deal in the world is half a roast chicken," he says. "Duck is also a great value, and gives the kitchen a chance to be creative." One recent example of Meyer's creativity is a "duck pancake" special at the Old Ebbitt Grill, another Clyde's property. Meyer's purveyor gave him a reasonable price on duck-leg meat, which Meyer then marinated, battered, and fried, and served with a dipping sauce.

Like Zehnder, Meyer feels that the key to poultry's popularity is that people are more confident ordering it in high-volume, midprice restaurants. "It's much easier to achieve consistent quality on our level with a product that is always cooked well done. Steaks and fish are more difficult, and I think the public knows that."

Clyde's chicken offerings range from hickory-smoked barbecued chicken ($8.95) to chicken *samosas*, diced chicken with Napa cabbage, ginger, and scallions fried in a won ton wrapper and served with spicy sweet and sour sauce ($4.50). Meyer points out that best-selling poultry items are likely to be fun, casual fare rather than the stuffed Kiev and Florentine preparations of the past.

RULE OF THE ROOST. Casual, fun, and simply prepared chicken dishes seem to be the rule of the roost even in upscale properties. At 1789, Clyde's white-tablecloth restaurant, boned half chickens are braised in a simple country Provençale sauce or a spicy curry preparation.

At The Trellis in Williamsburg, VA, the summer menu includes a mixed grill of chicken legs and sausage with pan-fried potatoes and apples, and the Courtyard Cafe in New York City serves grilled lemon-marinated chicken with french fries.

Some fine-dining operators are taking advantage of the rotisserie—a fairly recent equipment introduction in this country—to prepare poultry items simply but perfectly. "I was skeptical of spending extra money on a piece of equipment that would only cook a basic roast chicken," says Bob Kinkead, chef/owner of Twenty-One Federal in Washington, DC. "But it gives you a phenomenal finished product: crispy outside and moist inside.

A • MENU • SAMPLER

The following is a list of restaurants around the country and various poultry items on their menus.

TWENTY-ONE FEDERAL
Washington, DC

THAI CHICKEN SALAD ***$16.00***
Served with chiles and spicy peanut dressing

SMOKED DUCK SALAD ***$17.00***
Served with rhubarb and warm goat cheese

GRILLED QUAIL ***$27.00***
Served with Virginia ham, foie gras, and Anna potato

CHEF ALLEN'S
North Miami Beach, FL

GRILLED DUCK BREAST ***$15.75***
Grilled medium, served with curried couscous, raisins, and pine nuts

CHICKEN BREAST ***$14.50***
Served with sun-dried bing cherries, brandy, and wild rice

SAN SIMEON
Dallas, TX

PAN-FRIED BOBWHITE QUAIL ***$8.75***
Granny Smith apple and wild rice salad with blackberry mustard dressing

PECAN-CRUSTED CHICKEN ***prix fixe***
Served with shoestring potatoes and honey-mustard sauce

KULETO'S
San Francisco, CA

PETTO DI POLLO ***$9.95***
Ricotta and herb-stuffed chicken breast, with roasted pepper sauce

MAXALUNA
Boca Raton, FL

SPIT-ROASTED HALF CHICKEN ***$14.25***
Served with lemon gremolata

OAK-GRILLED BABY HEN ***$15.75***
Served with sautéed escarole, pine nuts, raisins, olives, and sun-dried tomatoes

RAY'S BOATHOUSE
Seattle, WA

1/2 SMOKED CHICKEN ***$10.95***
½ Washington chicken, smoked over alder, served with Yakima Valley apple chutney

RED ROBIN INT'L.
Irvine, CA

CHICKEN MILANO ***$7.95***
Charbroiled chicken breast marinated in garlic, lemon, and butter. With fettuccine Alfredo, broccoli, artichoke hearts, and tomatoes

BAY TOWER ROOM
Boston, MA

NEPBED ROASTED CHICKEN AND SAUTEED BREAST OF DUCK ***$22.00***
Served with leek and raspberry vinegar sauce

CHEZZ CHAZZ
Chicago, IL

CHICKEN POT PIE ***$8.95***
Phyllo pastry baked around chunks of chicken, colby cheese with mushrooms, onions, and roasted garlic cloves in a light cream sauce

PRAIRIE
Chicago, IL

GRILLED DUCK SALAD ***$11.00***
Sliced duck breast with marinated root vegetables and honey-thyme dressing

MALTESE GRILL
San Francisco, CA

ROAST GARLIC CHICKEN ***$9.95***
Half a lightly smoked chicken, stuffed with slivers of garlic and roasted on the rotisserie

MENU IDEAS

Many of our customers, especially at lunch, like the option of having a simple meal that still has a knockout flavor."

Kinkead recommends cooking birds that weigh at least 2½ lb. on the rotisserie; smaller birds, such as squab, tend to overcook inside before the skin crisps outside. Larger poultry such as duck cook well, but he cautions that they may spit and flare up as the fat renders.

To prepare spit-roasted chicken, Kinkead first stuffs a roast garlic and fresh herb compound butter under the skin, then places carrots, onions, celery, and dried thyme in the cavity. To secure the birds on the spit, he lays them backbone to cavity before trussing. A 2½-lb. chicken will cook in 35 to 45 min. on the rotisserie, which produces a temperature hotter than an oven, but lower than a grill.

TALKING TURKEY. The hearty taste appeal of roast turkey is the cornerstone of the menu at Stuff 'N Turkey Inc., based in Pikesville, MD. The company currently has five units open in Florida and Maryland, and plans to open three more in 1989, including one in Plymouth, MA. Average unit volume is $500,000, and checks average $5.50. "Opening in Plymouth was a natural for us," says vice president Alan Morstein, "because it's Thanksgiving every day at our stores. Better yet, it's the day *after*, when you get to eat all those great sandwiches."

The highlight of Stuff 'N Turkey's post-Thanksgiving motif menu is Thanksgiving Dinner on a Sandwich ($4.95), which features roast turkey breast, stuffing, and cranberry sauce on a choice of breads such as marble rye, sunflower seed, sourdough, or oat bran. Other popular sandwiches are the Turkey Powerhouse, turkey breast, havarti cheese, honey mustard, lettuce, tomatoes, and alfalfa sprouts, and the Turkey Barbeque, an open-face sandwich with chunks of turkey, coleslaw, onion, green peppers, and barbecue sauce. "Sidekicks" include homemade whipped potatoes, stuffing, scalloped apples, and turkey soup du jour.

"The secret to our concept, which we call 'gourmet fast food,' is that people want simpler, more recognizable food," says Morstein. Simple, however, does not mean boring; cold salads range from Oriental turkey salad ($4.25), featuring shredded turkey breast, iceberg lettuce, toasted sesame seeds and almonds, scallions, and chow mein noodles, to a turkey pasta salad ($3.85) that teams turkey breast with rotini pasta, lettuce, tomatoes, and seasonal vegetables.

ALL THE TRIMMINGS. Stuff 'N Turkey purchases 16- to 18-lb. bone-in breasts and slow-roasts them overnight for use the next day. Morstein figures each breast yields approximately 7 lb. of usable meat, including the trimmings that go into barbecued and curried turkey items. Food cost at the units is projected at 31%, but may need to be adjusted if turkey breast prices increase. "Turkey is definitely more expensive now, but seems to be stabilizing," says Morstein.

The price/value of chicken has helped to subsidize the volatile cost of seafood for Plano, TX-based Bay Street seafood specialty restaurants. Marketing manager Karen Willison reports that the 8% chicken menu share has had a positive impact on Bay Street's food cost. In addition, she says, "Our seafood market research shows that seafood restaurants have to battle the image of being high-priced and lacking variety. I have no doubt that adding chicken to the menu has built customer traffic." The top-selling lunch item at Bay Street, in fact, is a blackened chicken breast sandwich. Blackened chicken is also a popular dinner entree, and a new sampler plate combines blackened chicken, chargrilled herb-marinated chicken, and lemon-sautéed chicken. In addition, blackened chicken fajitas currently in test in the Texas restaurants have been "home runs," according to Willison.

Additional recipes are available for free. For your convenience, we invite you to use the "Letter to the Editor" postcard in the back of the issue. Please label requests "Poultry."

THE • GAME • PLAN

Chef Michel Beaulne

Using local products and recipes grounded in regional heritage are two ways to market your menu. Poultry is a natural category to help tap into this trend. Readily raised chickens and wild game have long provided nearly every part of the world with an inexpensive food source, and encouraged traditions of eating fowl.

Updating tradition and using ingredients from the local larder is a way of life for Michel and Louise Beaulne, proprietors of L'Auberge Clémentine in Oka, Québec. Located 20 miles from Montreal, the 14-year-old restaurant occupies the house where Louise's grandmother Clé used to live. The cheeses, maple syrup, apples, potatoes, fiddleheads, and asparagus native to the area are the basis for Beaulne's creative cuisine, but it is the local game birds of which he is most proud.

Local farmers raise pheasant, quail, duck, and partridge for Beaulne; he says that people are responding to the quality of the farmed product by eating much more game than they used to. "Also, the guests like the hearty taste and the fact that it is a little bit different," he says. Signature dishes at Clémentine include quail breasts with wild garlic and apple brandy, pheasant breast in black currant sauce, squab with mushrooms and wild rice in a cabbage leaf, and the quail with cool sweet pepper sauce and apples (pictured on page 179). The recipe for the sweet pepper sauce is an adaptation of Michel's grandmother's pepper marmalade.

Beaulne recommends cooking dark-fleshed game birds such as squab and quail quickly—like a steak—so that they remain moist and tender. Tender duck breasts should also be cooked to medium doneness.

L'Auberge Clémentine has been named "Best Restaurant of 1988" by the ministry of agriculture, and Beaulne was recently honored as a visiting chef to the James Beard House in New York City.

NOTE

ONLY THE FOLLOWING PAGES OF THIS PUBLICATION HAVE BEEN FILMED

Cov. 1, Pgs. 2, 4, 5, 12, 77,80,81
77-81, 86-89, 92, 93, 98, 99,
102, 103, 106, 107, 110, 111,
114, 115, 118, 119, 122, 123,
126, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136,
138, 142, 144, 146, 148, 150,
155, 156, 158, 162, 163, 165,
166, 168, 170, 172, 174-176,
178, 183, 184, 186, 188, 190,
192, 194, 196, 198, 200, 202,
204, 211, 212, 214, 216, 218,
220, 222, 224, 226, 228, 230,
232